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National Longitudinal Survey of Labor Market Experience

NLSY79 Young Adult Survey

QUESTIONNAIRE

Round Nineteen

2000

Note: This is the paper version of the 2000 Young Adult questionnaire that was administered as a CATI/CAPI instrument in the field.

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This document is a preliminary version of the NLSY97 round 19 young adult questionnaire. It contains few explanatory notes and is mainly intended for the use of survey staff and experienced NLS researchers. This version of the questionnaire represents the content of the interview as written at the beginning of the field period. Instrument testing and use in the field may necessitate some adjustments, which will be reflected in the final version of the questionnaire released in conjunction with the data set.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This document contains the paper version of the 2000 questionnaire of the NLSY79 Young Adult cohort. The dominant interview mode for the Young Adult portion of the NLSY79 was Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI), with a smaller percentage of Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) than in past NLSY79 Young Adult (YA) rounds.

Using information gathered in previous interviews, text fills and skips, we have tried to minimize error while presenting detailed questions personally tailored to each respondent. Our goal in this document is to make the content of the interview schedule as comprehensible as possible by producing a clear, complete, and compact paper copy of all possible questionnaire paths. With this in mind, the paper version of the 2000 Young Adult CATI/CAPI questionnaire has been formatted as similarly as possible to a traditional paper questionnaire (PAPI). Additional information is included to make the computer-driven choices and paths as clear as possible for data users.

The resulting document accurately summarizes the "conversation" between the interviewer and respondent. We use the term "conversation" to emphasize the difference between the questionnaire and the codebook. The codebook contains the data released as a result of the interview, but some information collected during the interview is not present in the codebook. For example, the questionnaire includes questions that collect names of household members, employers, etc. Such items are not released, so the questions that collect them are not present in the codebook. Conversely, the codebook contains some information not directly collected in the interview. For example, while created variables are documented in the codebook, there is no reference to them in the questionnaire as they are not part of the conversation between interviewer and respondent.

In order to simplify the questionnaire and the public use data file, we have dropped a number of time variables from which elapsed time can be calculated (time stamps). A time stamp appears at the beginning of each major section of the questionnaire. Other time stamps have been placed around various sets of questions. Elapsed time may be very useful for a variety of methodological studies. If you are interested in these data, please contact CHRR for additional information. Suggestions for improving the questionnaire or comments on irregularities should also be directed to CHRR User Services.

To aid researchers in using the questionnaire, this introduction provides information on several topics. Typical question blocks are described and key terms such as "Distribution Code Block," "Lead in Questions," and "Save Arrays." are defined. The section below explains how to follow the flow of the interview through the questionnaire, and clarifies the instrument compression techniques that have helped us to produce a concise questionnaire

II. TYPES AND FORMATS OF QUESTION BLOCKS

Question records are the building blocks of the CAPI questionnaire, with various types of records performing different data collection and/or manipulation functions. Loosely grouped, CAPI question records will: (a) provide administrative information that assists the interviewer or provides an introduction to the next question; (b) provide question text and control for data entry of the response; or (c) perform internal operations and calculations to guide the interview and maintain the internal data storage during the interview. All question records essential to understanding either the content of the survey or the flow of respondents through the interview will appear within the 2000 NLSY79 Young Adult paper questionnaire.

In order to provide a more succinct questionnaire, the instrument was compressed by eliminating question records that contained information that was nonessential to understanding the skip patterns in the questionnaire. Examples of the type of dropped questions include internal time stamps, questions establishing appropriate text fills, and questions saving a text version of a numeric answer for use later in the questionnaire. The 2000 Young Adult CAPI instrument included over 2000 numbered question records, only some of which are essential to understanding the action content and conversational flow of the survey. The process of dropping nonessential records and then changing the lead in and next question specifications so that the skip pattern does not have any gaps is referred to as "skip pattern compression." The resulting questionnaire still contains all relevant information about skip patterns and universes and is easier for researchers to use.

Two types of question blocks appear in the paper version of the CATI/CAPI questionnaire: (1) question blocks that appear on the computer screen for the interviewer to respond to [all of record types (a) and (b) above] and (2) question blocks that do not appear but direct respondents down particular survey paths [some but not all of record type (c) above]. Figure 1 shows an example of a typical question block that might appear to the interviewer. Figure 2 shows an example of a typical question block that governs a skip internally but does not appear. Each question block contains a question name as well as some question text, either for the interviewer to read aloud or silently or to instruct the computer as to what actions to perform. The question text may contain "save arrays" which appear as bracketed text. Because of the importance of save arrays to the functionality of the CATI/CAPI survey, they are discussed at length below. Each question block also includes an indication of the lead-in questions and any subsequent branching involved if an answer sends a respondent to a question other than the very next one. Question blocks that appear to the interviewer and require an answer from the respondent also contain either a distribution code block showing available answer choices or a graphic indicating the type of answer entered. These components are explained in the following paragraphs.

Q3-13

What [is/was] [name of R's partner()()]'s religion? (INTERVIEWER: CODE WITHOUT READING CATEGORIES)

1	Roman Catholic	9	Unitarian
2	Jewish	10	Quaker
3	Baptist	11	Non-Denominational
4	Lutheran	12	Other Protestant (SPECIFY)
5	Methodist	13	Muslim, Moslem
6	Presbyterian	14	Buddhist
7	Episcopalian	15	Other (SPECIFY)
8	Mormon	16	None

Lead-In: Q3-12 [Default]

Figure 1. CAPI Question Block Appearing to Interviewer

Q3-LOOP-END

UNTIL([loop collection information about spouses/partners],[loop collection information about spouses/partners]=[number of members on the partner roster]);

/* End loop asking details about each spouse/partner */

Lead-In: Q3-15 [Default], Q3-13b [1:1], Q3-13b [7:7]

Figure 2. CAPI Question Block Not Appearing to Interviewer

A. QUESTION NAME

The question name appears on the first line of each question block. Question names are the unique identifiers assigned to identical questions across CAPI survey years. Question names provide information on: (a) the section of the instrument from which each question was derived —e.g., question names beginning with Q2 - come from the "Family Background" section of the questionnaire, while Q11 - questions come from the "Training" section; and (b) the order in which the question was administered within each section. Previous and subsequent NLSY79 Young Adult CAPI surveys that field this exact question will use the same question name to help identify comparable questions across years.

> Example: Q3-2 This question comes from the "Dating and Relationship History" section of the questionnaire, which is usually the third section. As modules are added or dropped the number of sections in an interview changes; however, the original section number is maintained to make finding comparable questions across rounds easier. The "2" only suggests its original position; sometimes questions 1a, 1b, 1c, etc. may be inserted between 1 and 2, and sometimes questions are dropped or reordered.

In many sections of the questionnaire, a series of questions is asked more than once but about a different target; for example, the same set of questions is asked about each household member or about each employer the respondent has had since the date of last interview. We refer to this kind of question series as a "loop." In the 1994 and 1996 Young Adult CAPI surveys, loops were hard coded, and loop extensions were part of the actual question name.

Beginning in 1998 and continuing in the 2000 questionnaire, loops were programmed to be dynamic with only one set of original question records created. The CATI/CAPI survey system continues to ask a set of questions in a looped series until a specified condition is met, appending an incremented loop counter to the question name each time the series is looped through. These loop counters are present as part of the question name in the codebook; however, the questionnaire contains no loop counters in question names.

Looped sections begin with a "REPEAT" command and end with an "UNTIL" command. Most "REPEAT" commands occur in questions containing the words "LOOP-BEGIN" as part of the question name, and most "UNTIL" commands occur in questions containing the words "LOOP-END" as part of the question name. The information in parentheses after the "REPEAT" and "UNTIL" commands provides the user with information concerning the purpose of the loop and the criteria for exiting the loop. For example, the question Q3-LOOP-BEGIN contains the question text "REPEAT ([loop collection information about spouse/partners])." Question Q3-LOOP-END contains the question text "UNTIL ([loop collection information about spouse/partners]=[number of members on the partner roster])." Together these questions instruct the survey program to ask all necessary questions between these two questions for as many spouse/partners as were listed on the roster collected in question Q3-5-A.

If the same question was asked in 1994, and again in 1996, it will have the same question name. Similarly, if the same question was asked in 1998, and again in 2000, it will have the same question name. However, the conversion from a DOS-based survey program to a Windows-based survey program for 1998 made maintaining exact question names possible only in non-looped areas. Items repeated in 1994, 1996, 1998 and 2000 in non-looped areas continue to have the same question names in most sections, although the transition was imperfect. In looped areas, as much of

the original question name as possible was retained. For example, in the Employer Supplements, what was QES1-71A in 1994 and 1996 becomes QES-71A.01 in 1998 and 2000. Remember that in the questionnaire, QES-71A appears as the question name, with the loop extension .01 appearing in the codebook. Maintaining question names as much as possible makes it easier for the user to link identical items across these rounds.

B. QUESTION TEXT

This field contains the text of the question that the interviewer asked the respondent or other information used to direct the flow of the interview. The following types of text may appear:

Question text?	Text that is asked of the respondent appears in a conventional mixture of upper and lowercase letters. This kind of question text is present in Figure 1.
(COMMENTS TO INTERVIEWER:)	Text in all uppercase is either an instruction to the interviewer or a clarifying comment. NORC interviewers do not read these items to the respondent. This kind of question text is present in Figure 1.
Internal Code;	When a question record contains a machine instruction, that instruction is printed in this field. Such instructions end with a semi-colon. These instructions are accompanied by internal comments as described below. This kind of question text is present in Figure 2.
/* comments */	Internal comments that explain what a machine instruction does are set off by a leading "/*" and a trailing "*/." These comments explain the function being performed by the internal code so that persons unfamiliar with the command syntax can follow the interview protocol. This kind of question text is present in Figure 2.

C. SAVE ARRAYS

"Save arrays" are fields in which information is stored. Each such field, or save array, is assigned a name. For example, the name of the respondent's current employer would be stored in the "EMPLOYER.NAME(1)" save array for use during the interview. This "save array name" is then used to reference and access the data in the save array field during the actual operation of the survey. Each time a question refers to the current employer, the computer automatically inserts the name of the employer into the question. Information stored in save arrays is used:

a) as part of the actual text of survey questions (e.g. the name of a given household member, child, employer, types of training programs, different sources of income for household members);

b) to govern paths through the questionnaire. The save array field is accessed, and the content (or absence of content) is checked. The path through the questionnaire is determined based upon the information in the save array field;

c) as elements in equations and calculations which are used to produce new pieces of information which may be used later in the instrument.

When used in a question text, save arrays are similar to the text fills used in the PAPI NLS interviews. These text fills indicated that the interviewer should substitute a given word or phrase into the question at the time of the interview so it read correctly. For example, in a printed PAPI questionnaire one would often see "*Since (DATE OF LAST INTERVIEW) have you…"*; this phrase would instruct the interviewer to insert the actual date for a given respondent. However, correctly inserting such text fills was the job of the interviewer and often involved flipping between pages.

One immediate difference in the CATI/CAPI questionnaire is that there are far more text fills, and most of them are automated or handled by the computer. Some CATI/CAPI text fills are identical to those used in the PAPI interviews, such as *"he/she"* to handle gender fills. The major new feature is the automation of the text fills through

the save arrays. In the date of last interview example, the computer code in the CAPI questionnaire would automatically insert that date into the question. The interviewer never actually sees the text "*[Date of last interview]*" on the screen, only the date stored in that location.

In this questionnaire, text fills which refer to a save array are represented by bracketed text describing what piece of information is substituted in the interview. Question blocks governing internal skips also contain save arrays with a verbal description of the content of each save array in bracketed text. Although neither the text fills nor these internal questions are ever seen by an interviewer, researchers can use this information to follow the flow of the interview.

D. DISTRIBUTION CODE BLOCK

When a question requires the choice of one or more items from a predefined list, that list, or distribution code block, is shown in the question block. This type of question is used as the example in Figure 1. Each item in the distribution code block has three components:

Code: The numeric code associated with each possible response is listed first. All data in the NLSY79 Young Adult public use data file are numeric, so each possible item that could be selected is associated with an integer.

Text: Next is the item text or description of the code, such as Yes or No. As a general rule, if the descriptions are in all capital letters, the interviewer codes without reading the categories out loud. If the descriptions are mixed case, the interviewer generally reads the categories aloud. However, in 2000, some questions have additional interviewer instructions telling the interviewer to read the categories only if necessary. This approach was taken to facilitate the telephone interview mode.

Skip: When the selection of a specific response determines which question will be asked next, a *(GO TO QK-nn)* notation follows the response text, where K refers to the section number and nn refers to the question number within that section. If no explicit skip is given for a category, then that answer goes to the next physical question listed in the questionnaire.

E. DATA ENTRY GRAPHICS

When a question requires the interviewer to record a text or numeric answer provided by the respondent, the paper version indicates some information about the entry required. For example, on questions asking about specific dates, the graphic in the paper questionnaire lets the user quickly determine whether month, day and year are asked or month and year only. Similarly, for questions where the numeric answer is continuous, the graphic provided will indicate how many digits are allowed and whether or not a decimal answer is allowed. For some questions that collect numeric data (hours, weeks, dollar amounts, etc.), the question block contains additional information below the graphic indicating ranges of answers. This is present whenever the next question to be asked depends upon the numeric value falling in some range. However, the interviewer would actually enter the exact number provided by the respondent and this exact number would be recorded in the data set.

F. LEAD IN QUESTIONS

When using PAPI questionnaires, researchers needed to study the instrument in detail to determine under what circumstances a particular question was asked. The CAPI questionnaire simplifies this process somewhat by including a "Lead in(s)" field in the question block. This field lists the questions that lead into each particular item.

Examples:

Q2-31b:[default]	This means that the default path from question Q2-31b leads to the current question, but there may be conditions under which a different path would be taken.
Q2-31b:[all]	This means that all cases in which Q2-31b is asked will lead to the current question. Please note this does not imply all respondents are asked question Q2-31b.
Q2-31b:[1:4]	This means that whenever the response category for question Q2-31b takes on the values one to four (inclusive), the next question will be the current question record. If the response to Q2-31b is some other value, the respondent may next be asked a different question.
Q2-31b	When the lead in question is shown without a qualifier such as [Default], [All], or [1.4], this is a sign that the "skip pattern compression" algorithm dropped intervening records that could be suppressed (see "Instrument Compression" below). In such cases, if the user refers back to the lead in question, this earlier question will clarify the flow of the interview.

By tracing the skip pattern backward, one may determine the universe of respondents asked a given question. This universe information is a new feature not present in the documentation for paper and pencil interviews.